Background

Caller Identification or "Caller ID" acts like an electronic peephole. It allows a person receiving a phone call to see who is calling before answering the phone. A caller's number and/or name is displayed either on your phone (if your phone has this feature) or on a display unit that you must buy separately. The number and/or name will appear on the display unit or on your phone after the first ring. As the caller, this service lets you identify yourself to the person you are calling.

Caller ID Fees

Caller ID is an optional service offered by telephone companies for an additional monthly fee. (Fees vary by phone company.) You can call your local telephone service provider to find out what this fee is or to obtain additional information about Caller ID.

Tips for Consumers

Look before you dial:

- To block your telephone number for any call, dial ***67** before dialing the telephone number.

- To unblock your number for any call (if you have a blocked line), dial ***82** before dialing the telephone number.

Blocking and Unblocking

The FCC's national Caller ID rules protect the privacy of the person called and the person calling by requiring telephone companies to make available free, simple, and uniform per-line blocking and unblocking processes. These rules give you the choice of delivering or blocking your telephone number for any interstate (between states) call you make. (The FCC does not regulate intrastate calls.)

- **Per-call blocking** – To block your phone number and name from appearing on a recipient's Caller ID unit on a single phone call, dial ***67** before dialing the phone number. Your number will not be sent to the other party. You must redial *67 each time you place a new call.

- **Per-line blocking** – Some states allow customers to select per-line blocking. With this option, your telephone number will be blocked for every call you make on a specific line – unless you use the per-line unblocking option. If you want your number to be transmitted to the called party, dial ***82** before you dial the number you are calling. You must re-dial *82 each time you place a call.

- **800 number/toll-free calls** – Simply requesting privacy when you call 800, 888, 877 and 866 numbers may or may not prevent the display of your telephone number. When you dial a toll-free number, the party you are calling pays for the call. The called party is able to identify your telephone number using a telephone network technology called Automatic Number Identification. FCC rules limit parties that own toll-free numbers from distributing and using this information, and require phone companies to inform customers that their telephone numbers are being transmitted to toll-free numbers in this way.

- **Emergency services** – Calls to emergency lines are exempted from federal Caller ID rules. State rules and policies govern carriers' obligations to honor caller privacy requests to emergency numbers.

- **Blocking Your Name** – Some Caller ID services also transmit the name of the calling party. If you request that your phone number be concealed, FCC rules require that a carrier also conceal your name.

(More)

For More Information

To learn more about Caller ID or the availability of this service in your area, contact your local telephone company or your state public utility commission.

You may also contact the FCC:

Phone:
1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) (voice)
1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) (TTY)

Mail:
Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

E-mail:
fccinfo@fcc.gov

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*For this or any other consumer publication in an alternative format
(electronic ASCII text, Braille, large print, or audio), please write or call us at the address
or phone number below, or send an e-mail to **FCC504@fcc.gov**.*

*To receive information on this and other FCC consumer topics
through the Commission's electronic subscriber service,
click on **http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/contacts/**.*

*This fact sheet is for consumer education purposes only and is not
intended to affect any proceeding or cases involving this subject
matter or related issues.*

10/07/05* - cpb

FCC

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